

# SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

106th Congress  
1st Session

Vote No. 237

July 30, 1999, 10:43 a.m.  
Page S-9895 Temp. Record

## TAXPAYER REFUND ACT/Debt Reduction Only, No Tax Relief

**SUBJECT:** Taxpayer Refund Act of 1999 . . . S. 1429. Roth motion to table the Hollings motion to recommit with instructions.

### ACTION: MOTION TO TABLE MOTION TO RECOMMIT AGREED TO, 65-35

**SYNOPSIS:** As reported, S. 1429, the Taxpayer Refund Act of 1999, will give back to the American people \$792 billion of the \$3.3 trillion in surplus taxes that the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has projected that the Federal Government will collect over the next 10 years. The projection is based on assumptions of 2.4-percent average annual growth in the economy, no growth in discretionary spending after 2002, and entitlement spending growth as required under current law. Approximately \$1.9 trillion of the surpluses will be Social Security surpluses (Republicans have been attempting to defeat a Democratic filibuster of a proposal to protect those surpluses from being spent; see vote Nos. 90, 96, 166, 170, 193, and 211). After protecting the Social Security surpluses and providing tax relief of \$792 billion, \$505 billion will remain for additional spending or debt reduction. The average growth rate over the past 50 years has been 3.4 percent. The current growth rate is around 4 percent. If the 3.4-percent average rate is maintained for the next 10 years, then (using the CBO rule-of-thumb chart from Appendix C of the January 1999 Economic and Budget Outlook) the surplus will be roughly \$4.9 trillion, not \$3.3 trillion. Key tax relief provisions include that the bottom tax rate will be lowered to 14 percent and expanded (providing \$297.5 billion in tax relief over 10 years) and the tax burden on families will be cut (providing \$221.7 billion in tax relief). Tax relief will also be given to encourage saving for retirement, to make education and health care more affordable, to lower death taxes, and to lower taxes on small businesses.

**The Hollings motion to recommit** with instructions would instruct the Finance Committee to report the bill back within 3 days with an amendment "to defer" all tax relief and to apply any surplus that accrues to debt reduction.

All votes after vote No. 233 were on amendments or motions that were made after all debate time had expired. However, 2 minutes of debate were allowed before each vote by unanimous consent, some statements were inserted in the record, and some amendments and motions were debated prior to being offered or made. Senator Roth moved to table the Hollings motion. Generally,

(See other side)

YEAS (65)			NAYS (35)			NOT VOTING (0)	
Republicans (54 or 98%)		Democrats (11 or 24%)	Republicans (1 or 2%)	Democrats (34 or 76%)		Republicans (0)	Democrats (0)
Abraham	Helms	Bayh	Voinovich	Akaka	Hollings		
Allard	Hutchinson	Bingaman		Baucus	Inouye		
Ashcroft	Hutchison	Breaux		Biden	Johnson		
Bennett	Inhofe	Kennedy		Boxer	Lautenberg		
Bond	Jeffords	Kerrey		Bryan	Leahy		
Brownback	Kyl	Kerry		Byrd	Levin		
Bunning	Lott	Kohl		Cleland	Lieberman		
Burns	Lugar	Landrieu		Conrad	Lincoln		
Campbell	Mack	Schumer		Daschle	Mikulski		
Chafee	McCain	Torricelli		Dodd	Moynihan		
Cochran	McConnell	Wyden		Dorgan	Murray		
Collins	Murkowski			Durbin	Reed		
Coverdell	Nickles			Edwards	Reid		
Craig	Roberts			Feingold	Robb		
Crapo	Roth			Feinstein	Rockefeller		
DeWine	Santorum			Graham	Sarbanes		
Domenici	Sessions			Harkin	Wellstone		
Enzi	Shelby						
Fitzgerald	Smith, Bob (I)						
Frist	Smith, Gordon						
Gorton	Snowe						
Gramm	Specter						
Grams	Stevens						
Grassley	Thomas						
Gregg	Thompson						
Hagel	Thurmond						
Hatch	Warner						

#### EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

- 1—Official Business
- 2—Necessarily Absent
- 3—Illness
- 4—Other

#### SYMBOLS:

- AY—Announced Yea
- AN—Announced Nay
- PY—Paired Yea
- PN—Paired Nay

those favoring the motion to table opposed the motion to recommit; those opposing the motion to table favored the motion to recommit.

**Those favoring** the motion to table contended:

We are following Federal Reserve Chairman Greenspan's advice in this bill. He said his preference would be to use the surpluses for debt reduction, but if the choice were only to give it back in tax relief or spend it, it would be much better to pursue the latter course. As a practical, political reality, we believe that we are faced with precisely that choice. We have not even been able to break a Democratic filibuster against spending the Social Security surpluses (yet), so we do not know how we would could possible protect non-Social Security surpluses from being spent instead of used to reduce the debt. Agreeing to this amendment would not result in one red cent being used for debt reduction; instead, it would result in no tax relief and more than \$1 trillion in new Federal spending. The Federal Government is already too big and the American people are already overtaxed. We do not need to make either of those problems any worse. There is already very broad agreement that some tax refund of the surpluses is in order. This bill will provide nearly \$800 billion; a bipartisan amendment to give \$500 billion in tax relief was extensively discussed and then withdrawn; an amendment supported by Democrats to give \$300 in tax relief was debated and rejected; President Clinton has indicated he will accept giving about \$250 million in tax relief. Clearly there is broad agreement that tax relief should be provided. Therefore, we are confident that this amendment will be rejected by a wide margin.

**Those opposing** the motion to table contended:

Federal Reserve Board Chairman Greenspan testified that he thought that any surpluses that accrue over the next 10 years should be used to reduce the national debt. Our colleagues on both sides of the aisle like to quote Chairman Greenspan. The Hollings motion gives them a chance to follow his sagacious advice.